



LIVESTOCK

CATTLE AND CALVES

New Mexico's inventory of all cattle and calves as of January 1, 2007, was 1,580,000 head, an increase of 30,000 from 2006. Milk cow inventory increased from 340,000 head to 360,000 head. Dairy producers kept 120,000 heifers for replacement, 14 percent more than the previous year. Beef cow inventory decreased by 5 percent to 440,000 head in 2006. Ranchers held on to 90,000 heifers for beef cow replacement. The number of steers weighing 500 pounds or more increased 11 percent to 210,000 head. Bull inventory was 40,000 head. Calves on hand weighing less than 500 pounds, including both beef and dairy calves, totaled 220,000 head. The 2006 calf crop was estimated at 600,000 head. Cattle and calves on full feed for the slaughter market on January 1, 2007, decreased to 136,000 head compared to 143,000 head the previous year. Gross income from cattle and calves totaled \$909 million in 2006, down 6 percent.

RANGE AND PASTURE FEED 2006

Beginning in mid-March, weekly measurements of range and pasture conditions were taken with ratings of 1 percent very poor, 7 percent poor, 45 percent fair, 45 percent good, and 2 percent excellent. This was a big improvement from the previous year. April reports indicated ranchers received moisture throughout the month to improve range and pasture conditions. Ranchers continued supplemental feeding, hauling water, and finishing up branding during the month. May showed some improvement as ranchers were busy moving cattle. Pasture conditions in June remained steady at 6 percent very poor, 12 percent poor, 42 percent fair, 39 percent good, and 1 percent excellent. Temperatures began to get hot as much of the southern part of the state hit 100 degrees in early June. Scattered thunderstorms brought needed moisture throughout the month of July, benefiting most crops, livestock, and range conditions.

During August, rangeland improved with scattered rainfall. Many ranchers spent the month of September culling herds and marketing calves. In October ranchers began weaning calves and moving cattle to winter pastures. Throughout the remainder of the year, conditions were dry with cooler temperatures. The final pasture condition report the last week of November indicated 7 percent very poor, 28 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 29 percent good, and 7 percent excellent.

DAIRY

Beginning inventory of milk cows was 340,000 head on January 1, 2006. Ending inventory on January 1, 2007, totaled 360,000 head. The number of milk cows during the year averaged 355,000 head. Milk production continued at a record pace, reaching a high of 7.64 billion pounds. Cash receipts from marketings and gross producer income both decreased from the previous year due to a drop in milk prices. New Mexico ended the year ranked seventh in the nation in milk production and sixth in number of milk cows. For the fifth straight year, milk was ranked the number one cash commodity for the state.

SHEEP AND LAMBS

Sheep and lamb inventory as of January 1, 2007, totaled 130,000 head, down 16 percent from the year earlier. The number of breeding sheep for 2006 was 20,000 head lower at 110,000 head. Market sheep and lambs decreased to 20,000 head. The 2006 lamb crop, at 75,000 head, was 12 percent below the previous year. Producer gross income remained steady at \$6.65 million. Wool was sheared from 125,000 sheep and lambs, producing 940,000 pounds. Value of wool produced decreased by 39 percent to \$846 thousand as the average price of wool decreased from \$1.20 per pound to \$0.90 per pound.